

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY

ON

SB 437 & SB 438

August 26, 2015

CLAUDIA ROBLEE

OWNER – ArtVentures

Good morning Chairman Nofs and members of the Committee.

My name is Claudia Roblee; I'm the owner of owner of ArtVentures, an art gallery and custom picture framing business in Brighton. Thank you for allowing me to share comments with you on the importance of strong clean energy policies to small businesses like mine.

I've learned firsthand that energy efficiency measures can help businesses save money. My business uses halogen spotlights to showcase our artwork, which unfortunately causes high energy bills. Thanks to DTE's energy rebate, we were able to buy all new LED light bulbs to increase our energy efficiency. In just one year, we achieved a return on investment and are now saving \$200 per month on our energy bill.

Many Michigan businesses are utilizing the benefits of programs like these. Small Business Majority found nearly six in 10 Michigan small businesses have taken steps to improve their energy efficiency.

What's more, 59 percent of Michigan small businesses agree the expanded use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power can have economic benefits for small business owners by creating new business opportunities,.

Michigan is well-prepared to increase clean energy standards and move towards a clean energy economy. This year, Michigan will meet its goal of generating 10 percent of the state's electricity from renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and geothermal. Since this goal was set in 2008, the cost of renewable energy has fallen drastically, and consumers and small businesses are now saving money on energy costs.

Senate Bills 437 and 438 would undo this progress by repealing the state's renewable energy standard and scaling back goals for energy efficiency standards. Additionally, the legislation could result in utilities downsizing their energy efficiency programs, which would be disappointing to small business owners like me who have benefited from these programs.

Some have argued that stronger energy efficiency standards are bad for business and the economy. However, Small Business Majority's polling found the majority of Michigan small business owners believe strong clean energy policies help spur innovation and create economic growth. And research shows the state's renewable energy standard is already producing big benefits for the state, spurring \$2.9 billion in new clean energy investments and supporting more than 3,000 direct jobs in wind energy manufacturing.

Small businesses are struggling with the rising cost of doing business, including higher fuel and energy costs. Strong clean energy policies can help entrepreneurs save money through reduced energy costs, which is good for our small businesses, our environment and the economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

Sincerely,

Claudia Roblee, Owner

ArtVentures